

THE * NONCONFORMIST * ➤ MUSICAL * JOURNAL

A MONTHLY RECORD AND REVIEW

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF WORSHIP MUSIC IN THE NONCONFORMIST CHURCHES.

No. 51.

MARCH 1892.

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The late Sir Morell Mackenzie was interviewed, shortly before his death, by a representative of *The Strand Magazine*. It will be interesting to singers to know what this eminent throat specialist thought of smoking. "Let the singer who wishes to keep in the 'perfect way,'" said Sir Morell, "refrain from inhaling smoke, and let him take it as an axiom that the man in whom tobacco increases the flow of saliva to any marked degree is not intended by nature to smoke. Let him be strictly moderate in indulgence—the precise limits each man must settle for himself—and he will get all the good effect of the soothing plant without the bane which lurks in it when used to excess."

DR. PARKER has been interviewed by a representative of *Great Thoughts*. Amongst other things, he says he strongly believes in solo-singing in the Church. Formerly there was a general stampede at the conclusion of his sermon on Thursday mornings; but since a solo has been introduced during the offertory, very few leave till it is over.

The following (which comes from Yorkshire) is a sample of the kind of teaching that goes on

in some village schools where the parson reigns supreme:—

"I'm not a little Protestant,
As some would have me say;
I'm not a little Romanist;
So call me what you may.

In holy water I was washed,
And cleansed from all my sin;
'Twas there the Holy Ghost came down,
My soul to dwell within.

First to confession I must go,
And tell out all my shame;
My list of sins, all one by one,
In penitence must name."

"THE Central Gloucestershire Congregational Choir Union" has just been founded under auspicious circumstances. Mr. John Jacob, of Stroud, is secretary; Mr. J. W. Hopkins, of Gloucester, conductor; and Mr. A. G. Bloodworth, of Cheltenham, organist. We are glad to hear that all the ministers in the district have taken the greatest interest in the Union. The first festival is to be held in May or June. One very interesting and useful item on the programme might with advantage be adopted by other unions—viz., a competition in (1) quartet singing, (2) hymn singing at sight, (3) a prepared rendering of a selected hymn, and (4) an anthem.

WE understand that the books for the Crystal Palace Festival are going fast. Disappointment will be the result if choirs wishing to take part do not make early application.

COUNTRY choirs may be reminded that the various railway companies convey singers to London at specially low rates, and that tickets from London to the Palace and back, including admission, are provided free of charge. To take part in the Festival, therefore, is not nearly so costly as we believe some choirs imagine.

INFLUENZA has to be reckoned with nowadays in making engagements. About five hundred singers applied for books for the Choir Union Festival Service at the City Temple last month, but only some two hundred put in an appearance. From inquiries which have been made, the prevailing epidemic was responsible for most of the absentees.

WE are glad to learn that Mr. F. G. Edwards's appeal for funds to restore the tombstones of Shrubsole and Jacob has elicited a hearty response, and the work has been carried out. As the subscriptions received amounted to rather more than the cost of the renovation, the first strain of the melody of *Miles' Lane* as it originally appeared (in the key of C) has been cut into Shrubsole's stone—an excellent idea for expending the balance.

WE hope to be able to announce in our next issue the result of the Harvest Anthem Competition.

Music in the Scottish Churches.

(FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT.)

SIGNS of activity and interest in the music of our churches continue to be manifested on all hands. In Edinburgh, for example, there has recently been formed what is termed a "Praise Union" in connection with the Free Churches, the object of which, as stated in the constitution, is "to quicken the interest of the Church in congregational praise, and to secure for it due recognition as an important sphere of Christian activity, and generally to promote the efficiency of this branch of public worship." Among the various ways in which this object might be promoted, the Union has thought it desirable at the outset to address the ministry, and a copy of the circular sent out has been courteously forwarded to me by the secretary. Whether the ministers will all take it in good part to be lectured by the Union as to their duty in the matter of the service of praise is doubtful, but there is certainly in the circular nothing to which church musical workers themselves will not cordially subscribe.

Every one who knows anything of the subject at all agrees in the opinion that, save in a few exceptional cases, the Free Church of Scotland lags behind its sister branches of the Presbyterian Church, that it "has lost touch with a large section of the younger generation"; and no one doubts that "the important question of church connection often turns with our young people on the attractiveness of the service," or that the experience of every congregation can furnish instances of loss to the Church from this cause alone. It is unwise to ignore facts like these, or to seek to minimise their force and evade their lessons by disposing of them as instances of weak-kneed defection, to be looked for in the ordinary course of things. Responsibility cannot thus be shifted unless it can truly be said that every effort has been exhausted to make the service of praise all it ought to be, all it might be. The Union scores a point in quoting the words of Dr. Dods, one of the church leaders, in his recent commentary on St. John, where the essentials of worship music are dwelt upon. After pointing out the two tendencies among worshippers—the one to simplicity, the other to an ornate form—Dr. Dods goes on to say: "But all will agree that in external worship, while we strive to make it simple, we should also strive to make it good—the best possible of its kind. If we are to sing God's praise at all, then let the singing be the best possible, the best music a congregation can join in, and executed with the utmost skill that care can develop. Music which cannot be sung but by persons of exceptional musical talent is unsuitable for congregational worship; but music which requires no consideration and admits of no excellence is hardly suitable for the worship of God. I do not know what idea of God's worship is held by persons who never put themselves to the least trouble to improve it so far as they are concerned."

This, after all, is but a cautious statement of the very barest essentials of worship music; but as even this moderately pitched estimate leaves much of the Church's congregational praise under condemnation, it may be hoped that the ministers will cordially respond to the invitation of the new Union to help in the work of progress. What they are asked to do is stated under six heads, which, for the guidance of others who may desire to form such Unions, may be briefly summarised. The minister is first of all asked to show by his own attitude towards the subject that he looks upon the praise service as one of the spiritual agencies of the congregation. It is next suggested that short addresses on the duty and importance of praise, or on cognate

subjects, might now and again be given. The minister's occasional presence at the choir practice it is thought would also be beneficial, while in his regular visitations he might take the opportunity of urging the claims of the psalmody upon musical members of the different families. As a feeder for the choir a junior class is desiderated; and in selecting the praise material due thought should be given to securing variety of words and metre. It is hardly necessary to say that ministers are urged to let their choirmasters have a list of the psalms and hymns for the Sunday in good time for choir practice; and the suggestion is added that lists of new tunes proposed to be introduced during the month should be regularly published in the church magazine.

There is of course nothing new in all this, but it is well to keep the claims of our church music persistently to the front, and I sincerely trust that the Edinburgh Union may have such good results as will prove an example and a stimulus to others in parts of the country where a general shaking up of the musical dry bones is even more needed. I might just state that at the Union's second ordinary meeting, held the other evening, Mr. Love, of Falkirk, the author of "Scottish Church Music," gave an address upon "The Revival of Psalmody in Edinburgh Last Century," dwelling particularly on the work of that early pioneer Cornforth Gilson, and the meagre encouragement he received from the patrons of the city churches. Mr. Love also gave some interesting details of the primitive condition of psalmody in the city in those days, and generally went over the ground covered in his article in *The Scotsman* some two years ago.

While we are on the subject of Psalmody, a tribute must be paid to the memory of Mr. Joseph Geoghegan, one of the oldest and most highly respected music-masters in Edinburgh, who passed to his rest the other day. Those who in Scotland rejoice in an improved musical service in which the organ plays an important part do not know how much they owe to Mr. Geoghegan, who was in reality, along with Dr. Robert Lee, instrumental in securing the introduction of the once-dreaded "kist o' whistles" into the Presbyterian churches. A correspondent tells the story in one of the local papers. Somewhere about the year 1863, or earlier, Mr. Geoghegan succeeded in obtaining a harmonium for the choir practices at Old Greyfriars, Edinburgh, where he conducted the psalmody. Dr. Lee, the minister of the church, who was himself an excellent musician and thoroughly in sympathy with Mr. Geoghegan's endeavours to improve the musical side of the service, heard the effect of the harmonium with the voices at one of the practices, and the idea of using the instrument on Sunday at once occurred to him. It was a bold idea undoubtedly, but it was carried into a reality, and when the service of praise began the effect was electrical. No one had been told of the proposed innovation, and harmonium and player being concealed behind a curtain, an air of mystery was given to the whole proceeding. Of course a few bigots were displeased, but the majority agreed that the innovation was an immense success. The harmonium became a regular part of the service. An organ fund was raised at once, and an organ—practically, though not in reality, the first in the Church of Scotland—was introduced as early as 1864. The small paid choir was abolished; Mr. Geoghegan formed a choir from the musical talent of the congregation; and a choral society, which still flourishes under Mr. Glencorse, was started in 1865. What the introduction of that little harmonium meant to music in the Scottish churches I need hardly say. It was the small beginning of a movement which, in little more than a generation, has revolutionised the character of our Presbyterian services; and Mr. Geoghegan, deserving of remembrance for many things,

assuredly deserves best to be remembered for what he did thus early towards the improvement of our church music. I had the pleasure of knowing him personally, and may be allowed to add in a word my tribute to his memory as a genial, kindly, cultured gentleman, who possessed the esteem and the confidence of a wide circle of musical friends, and whose death at the comparatively early age of sixty-two is sincerely mourned.

The effect of putting our churches in telephonic communication with their members' homes will probably be somewhat different from what is at present anticipated. If people may have a service "delivered," as it were, while they sit around their own firesides, the churches will soon be empty, and the offertory plate may be stowed away among the lumber in the cellars. Here is Woodside Parish Church, Glasgow, setting an example by putting the building in connection with the telephone system, so that all the services are "available" wherever the telephone is in use. The other week, whilst a performance was being given of Sullivan's *The Prodigal Son*, many people were listening to it in every direction for fifty miles around the city. It would thus seem that if the people will not come to church—and certainly their inclinations in that way are not becoming stronger—the church can be taken to the people. But how are those with telephones in their houses to be got to pay for the privilege of hearing what other people having no such advantage are required to pay for at the church door? This, to be sure, is a somewhat sordid view of the matter; but even churches "must live," and I fear the telephone will not make the living any easier than it is at present.

A very sapient Scotch critic, reviewing a new collection of "School Hymns," says: "In a future edition it might be as well to attribute 'All people that on earth do dwell' to anybody rather than to W. Keeth. The hundredth psalm may not have been written by King David, but W. Keeth is a little too post-exilic for even the most advanced critic." This is the prettiest piece of quibbling and of hyper-criticism I have seen for a long time. It would be enough to make his ghost revisit the glimpses of the moon if David thought that all the doggerel-rhymed versions of his psalms were to be laid to his charge, instead of at the door of those who, from the Reformation downwards, have manipulated the rhyming machines. To charge the Psalmist, for example, with this sad stuff of Hopkins's would be something like the unpardonable sin:—

"Why dost withdraw thy hand aback
And place it in thy lappe?
O! pluck it out, and be not slow
To give thy foes a rappe."

As to the hundredth psalm, "All people that on earth do dwell," it was written by William Kethe, and by no other. That, at any rate, is the conclusion of all students of the history of the old metrical psalms; and if the critic in question desires to upset the current opinion, he may as well begin with Mr. Julian's recently issued "Dictionary of Hymnology." After that he may attack the notice in the "Dictionary of National Biography," which will give William Kethe a place among its notables for no other reason than that he wrote "All people that on earth do dwell."

Your readers may care to have their attention directed to a new work which gives a most entertaining account of the Sabbath-day singing of the early New England Puritans. The book is by Mrs. Earle, and is entitled "The Sabbath in Puritan New England" (Hodder & Stoughton). I have just finished reading the volume, and can heartily recommend it, not only for its wealth of racy anecdote, but for the sympathetic spirit in which it is written. The book would be invaluable to any one lecturing on the humours of the old psalmody.

J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

RULES FOR A CHOIR UNION.

THE following rules, adopted by the recently formed Central Gloucestershire Congregational Choir Union, will possibly be useful to those who are interested in forming local unions:—

1.—This Union shall be called "The Central Gloucestershire Congregational Choir Union."

2.—The aims of this Union shall be the development of the Worship Music of our Churches, by

(a) The co-operation of the Choirs in the holding of Choir Festivals, and

(b) The periodical holding of Conferences for the Ministers, Choirmasters, and Organists of the district, at which papers shall be read, and other matters affecting the public Musical Services of the Churches may be considered and discussed.

3.—This Union shall consist of

(a) Such Congregational Choirs of the District as are affiliated with it, and

(b) Personal Members:

and shall be governed by a General Committee (three to form a quorum), consisting of a representative from each such Choir.

4.—The Officers of the Union shall be a President, Chairman of Committee, Secretary, Treasurer, Conductor, and Organist, who shall be elected annually by the General Committee.

5.—That the Annual Affiliation Fee be at the rate of Sixpence per Member of Choir, and One Shilling per Personal Member, both to be paid in advance through the local Conductor.

6.—That Choirs shall provide their own music for Festivals.

7.—That, in order to secure a sufficient rehearsal of Festival Music, a *minimum* attendance of three practices shall be required by the Committee on the part of every Member of the Choir.

8.—That each Member be provided with a Card of Membership, containing thereon a copy of these Rules, and a Register of Attendances at Rehearsals, in order to satisfy the Committee that Rule 7 has been faithfully observed.

9.—That no alteration of these Rules shall be made, unless at a meeting of which a week's notice of the proposed alteration shall be given in the circular convening such meeting.

AFFILIATION FORM.

Name of Chapel _____

Choir..... { Trebles
 { Altos
 { Tenors.....
 { Basses.....

Total No. of Choir... _____

*Personal { Trebles
Members. { Altos
 { Tenors.....
 { Basses.....

Total No. of Personal Members... _____

Total..... _____

On behalf of the Church:
(Signed),

Minister.

Organist, or

Choirmaster.

* Personal Members are musical friends, not ordinarily Choirs, who would be prepared to assist at the Festival.



Music at Barry Road Wesleyan Chapel, Dulwich.

THE church named above is situated in the midst of the district that lies between the thronged marts of Peckham Rye and the rural seclusion of Dulwich and Sydenham. It is thus well placed with respect to its *entourage*, being in touch on either side with a somewhat different class of people. It is a church of good size and admirable form: all modern Wesleyan churches, indeed, are of some architectural importance. It is lofty, comfortable, and warmly decorated; there are galleries on both sides and a deep gallery at the end. The interior is very similar to the buildings of the Established Church. The pulpit is on the left as one enters, hiding the organ, which is placed in a chamber; on the opposite side is the reading-desk; and between them, in an apse-like recess, are the seats of the choir, arranged longitudinally, facing each other.

On the Sunday morning of my visit both pulpit and reading-desk were draped in black, in recognition of the mourning into which the royal house had but recently been plunged. The church was well filled, and a good proportion of the congregation were young people. I was somewhat surprised at the number of late-comers, for getting late to church has been dropping out of fashion lately.

The choir and minister entered in a body, and the service began with the singing of an introductory sentence, "If we say we have no sin," set to music by J. B. Calkin. The choir alone took part in this, and it was sung without announce-

ment immediately after the opening voluntary. Then followed the remainder of the morning service as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer—the General Confession, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, etc. These were monotonized by the choir without preliminary note-giving by the organ, and the initial pitch was maintained uncommonly well.

The *Venite* was sung to chant No. 181 of the "Cathedral Psalter"—Dr. P. Hayes's well-known single chant in F. One of the Psalms for the day was read by the minister and people alternately the choir still maintaining the monotone. After the Psalm, the Gloria was sung to the same chant as the *Venite*. This is the practice at many of the Low Churches which remain. How it may be in Wesleyan circles I know not, but in many Evangelical places the singing of the Psalms is regarded as a step Romewards. It must be said that at Barry Road the reading was excellent (but then that reading was monotonizing, another abominable thing to Evangelicals of the straiter sort). How often it is otherwise! At most such places the impression given is of a neck-and-neck race, and the member who finishes first can often be detected heaving a sigh of breathless satisfaction. This is but a homily by the way—if perchance some Episcopalian eye should light on these schismatic pages—and has no reference to Barry Road.

The *Te Deum* was the well-known easy setting of Vaughan. In this the congregation, whose singing throughout was hearty, though I think mostly in unison, joined with spirit. The setting was evidently an old friend; indeed, the organist told me afterwards that he has serious thoughts of laying it on the shelf. The selection of settings in use is a good one, including compositions by Smart, Dykes, J. L. Hopkins, and others. The *Benedictus* was sung to chant No. 319, the well-worn Boyce in D. It may be said here, with reference to the Canticles, that they were very well sung by both choir and congregation. The enunciation was clear and not hurried, and the time perfect. There was no suspicion of dragging; but organ, choir, and congregation all kept together with a swing which, my experience tells me, is a general characteristic of Wesleyans. In one point the singing in this part of the service was a little open to amendment. The *rallentando* at the end of the Gloria was in each case, I thought, much overdone. There seems to be no argument at all for a *rallentando* save use and wont, and custom's behest might perhaps be fulfilled in a manner a little less long-drawn-out.

The hymn-book in use is the edition of Wesley's hymns produced under the musical direction of Dr. Mann of Cambridge—in many respects an admirable blending of the old and new. The first hymn was No. 984, "Awake, my soul, and with the sun." The first three verses were read by the minister, the remainder sung, and there was no amen. The Litany was now recited in the same way as the Prayers, the minister reading, the choir monotonizing; and the General Thanksgiving was said by the whole congregation.

Then came a short address to young people, and

then hymn 46, "The morning flowers display their sweets," to tune 39. Extempore prayer was offered for the royal family; and the sermon, preached by the Rev. William Foster, B.A., had special reference to the Duke of Clarence and Cardinal Manning. During the collection, four verses of hymn 947, "How happy every child of grace," were sung. It is usual at this part of the service to have an anthem, and on this occasion the anthem was to have been Macfarren's "The Lord is my Shepherd"; but, owing to the length of the service, this was omitted and the last hymn substituted.

The organ has two manuals and eleven speaking stops. It is unfortunately no new thing to have to say that the action is very stiff and very audible. The organ has another disadvantage in that the stops of the great organ are, unusually, placed on the left-hand side. The organist is, I believe, very dissatisfied with his instrument. During the service he scarcely used his reeds at all, owing to their unsatisfactory quality. I have no doubt that so well-attended a church will soon despatch its present instrument to the limbo of such things, and replace it by an instrument more worthy of the church and the choir.

Something has already been said or hinted at with regard to the choir, but there is still something to say. It consists of some thirty-five ladies and gentlemen, of whom about twenty were present on this occasion. The parts are well balanced, and I should say that considerable care is exercised in the selection of the voices. Many choirs are quite ruined by the prominence of one or two voices which were perhaps at one time "sweet and clear," but whose owners do not recognise that their best efforts are now but distressing. There is much pathos in the spectacle of these willing helpers—they are always the readiest and kindest-hearted—singing with such evident enjoyment to themselves, and so unconscious of the pain they inflict on others. One choirmaster I knew used his most violent adjectives—raucous, blatant, brassy, screech-owlsh—in the vain endeavour to drive some such from his choir without proceeding to the extremity of demanding resignations. But at Barry Road the quality of the voices is exceedingly good, and the singing is quiet and refined; and yet their lead is distinctly appreciable at the farther end of the church—a negative proof that leading is not synonymous with shouting. But I think the choir here ought to do well. They have an able choirmaster, Mr. W. J. Honeysett, an energetic secretary, Mr. A. C. Ritchie, and a short set of excellent rules, which are hung in the porch with other information. I cannot forbear quoting a sentence: "In order that the work of the choir may be a source of pleasure and interest to the members, choral music of varied character is provided for their use free of expense." Where a choir is formed on the conditions that all its members have good voices, read music, and will abide by the rules, success is more than half attained; and where such a choir is backed up by the church, success is a foregone conclusion.

The organist is Mr. H. Glaspoole, A.C.O., whose

likeness accompanies this article. Mr. Glaspoole is a good player. His first voluntary was, I think, extempore, and was a good introduction to the service. The concluding voluntary was the Dead March in *Saul*, played to a standing congregation. In this Mr. Glaspoole eschewed the after all somewhat cheap imitation of rolling drums, which is now almost traditional with organists. The preliminary drum-roll does not occur in the original score; but when such men as Dr. Westminster Bridge do the drumming, what are the others but a *profanum vulgus* if they do not sincerely flatter them? After the *Saul* march, the congregation dispersed to the strains of Beethoven's *Marche Funèbre* from the *Sonate Pathétique*.

Mr. Glaspoole excels in accompaniment; his time was good and his registration tasteful; above all things, his playing was soft. Nonconformist organists can take no better leaf out of the book of cathedral organists than this—the soft accompanying of the Canticles and Psalms.

One or two things may be noticed in conclusion. The evening service is quite plain; there is no chanting and no anthem. The anthems are all separate and not from a book. Concerts are frequently given, and there is an orchestra connected with the church which plays on Sunday evenings at the mission services. Attached to the church is a fine lecture hall, in which is an American organ, and there is also a large church reception-room, well furnished with cushioned chairs, lounges, screens, and a piano. Again I say, the people at Barry Road should do well.

Authorities in Council.

THE ELECTION OF AN ORGANIST.

Scene—A meeting of Deacons, Elders, or Stewards the Minister presiding.

THE MINISTER.—As arranged at our last meeting, I inserted an advertisement for an organist in several papers, and I have received about seventy replies from applicants in almost all parts of the country. The point we now have to settle is how we are to weed out these applications to something like reasonable compass. To select a man out of seventy—none of whom we have seen—is impossible.

MR. SKINFLINT.—I should suggest that each of the applicants be invited to take a Sunday on trial. We should then see and hear them all, and we could make our choice. This arrangement would also save us the salary for almost a year and a half, and that's a consideration.

MR. MEDDLER.—Quite so; that would be a good stroke of business.

MR. COMMON SENSE.—Surely you cannot be serious in suggesting the postponement of the appointment of an organist for eighteen months!

MR. SKINFLINT.—Certainly I am. Why not? If you don't hear all these men, you may not get the best of them.

MR. OLD SCHOOL.—After a long experience in church matters, my opinion is that it is injurious to the best

interests of the church to have any position vacant longer than is absolutely necessary. I hope, therefore, that we shall be able to find a suitable organist in a few weeks at most.

THE MINISTER.—I heartily endorse that opinion. To think of carrying on a competition for a year and a half is out of the question; and no organist with any self-respect would play under such conditions.

MR. COMMON SENSE.—Exactly. Besides, if we had even twenty candidates to take a Sunday, the chances are we should forget all about the first few players by the time we reached the last one. And further, I am afraid an election conducted on those lines opens the door to a good deal of friction and party feeling.

THE MINISTER.—Having very carefully read all the applications, I think I could reduce the number of suitable candidates to about twelve—possibly less. For instance, a Roman Catholic applies; but however good a player he may be, he is quite out of sympathy with us. Another application is from the gentleman who now plays at the ritualistic church in the next town; but our simple form of service would be distasteful to him. I can, I am sure, weed out at least sixty of the applicants as being unsuitable.

MR. OLD SCHOOL.—Yes, sir. We must be careful not to engage a gentleman who wants to introduce any of these new-fangled notions of a ritualistic kind.

MR. COMMON SENSE.—My idea is that we should select, say, six or eight of the most suitable applicants, and that we should ask some well-known organist of good repute to hear these gentlemen play, and then advise us which one he considers the best. He might then take a Sunday or two, and we could form our own opinion of him.

MR. KNOW-ALL.—But why engage an organist to hear the applicants? Surely we could hear them and judge for ourselves.

MR. MEDDLER.—Certainly. An outside man does not know what we want. We are the people the organist has to please. So let us be guided by our own judgment.

THE MINISTER.—But, gentlemen, do you think we have sufficient technical knowledge to know which is the best player? For my own part I am sure I have not. I am fond of music, and can read by sight fairly well; but when it comes to organ playing it is a very different thing, for I never touched an organ in my life.

MR. SKINFLINT.—I know just what I like, and I could tell which man pleased me best. Surely this is all we want!

MR. KNOW-ALL.—Just so. I have been fond of music ever since I was a child, and, as you know, I can play the fiddle in good style. I therefore ought to be able to know whether a man is a good organist or not.

MR. COMMON SENSE.—If you were going to adjudicate upon a violin competition you may possibly be a competent judge. But unless we have an intimate knowledge of the organ and organ playing, I am afraid we are none of us able to criticise an organ performance.

THE MINISTER.—Further. None of us have the slightest knowledge of choir training, so we could

express no opinion on that important part of the organist's work. But the professional gentleman we propose to call in to advise us would know at once when he attended a choir practice which candidate was the most likely to get good singing.

MR. OLD SCHOOL.—And that is what we require chiefly. A very grand solo player may be all very well, but that qualification is of little or no use to us. We want a man who can make the singing "go," and who can accompany sympathetically.

MR. MEDDLER.—But won't a good solo player attract people to the chapel?

THE MINISTER.—Possibly. But if he is a poor accompanist he will drive as many away as his brilliant solo playing brings in. The fact is, gentlemen, a good many qualities are requisite to make a really good all-round church organist; and it is only one skilled in the art who is thoroughly competent to judge of the capabilities of the candidates. I am strongly of opinion that we should select, say, six applicants, and ask a professional organist to hear them and report to us, giving us the names in order of merit. We could then ask No. 1 to take a Sunday, or two Sundays if necessary, and if we liked him we would appoint him. If he did not please us we would pass on to No. 2.

MR. COMMON SENSE.—You would not have two candidates before us at the same time?

THE MINISTER.—No. I think that would be a mistake.

MR. MEDDLER.—But I should like to hear the six before deciding.

MR. COMMON SENSE.—But if you hear a man with whom you are pleased, why go further? That is all you want.

MR. SKINFLINT.—I suppose we must consent to the method suggested by our minister. But I don't see why we are not able to choose for ourselves.

THE MINISTER.—I am sure, gentlemen, my method is the right one. It is the usual one, and I have every reason to believe that we shall in this way secure a thoroughly good man. Arrangements shall therefore be made to proceed at once to the election of an organist.

Worship Music.

By G. H. ELY, B.A.

HYMNS.—I.

MUSIC is said to be capable of expressing various thoughts and emotions. Programme-makers and critics certainly find in the symphonies of Beethoven and the *Vorspiele* of Wagner thoughts wondrous high; but then these gentlemen are not always unanimous in their findings, and it may indeed be doubted whether their discoveries are not sometimes subjective in origin. But it is a matter of common experience that men do express simple feelings by cries more or less articulate, and that these cries are at times musical.

If emotion were truly expressible by sound without words, there could be no logical objection to the holding of a service in which the congregation should praise God each for himself, as their feelings prompted them. Or even if words were musically sung, each would express

POPULAR ANTHEMS FOR CHURCH USE. No 4.

ROCK OF AGES

composed by

CHARLES BUXTON GRUNDY.

Published at 44 Fleet Street, London, E.C.

Price 1½d

ORGAN.

Andante sostenuto. $\text{♩} = 69.$

Man.

The organ introduction is in G major, 4/4 time, marked 'Andante sostenuto' with a tempo of 69 beats per minute. It consists of two staves: the right hand plays a series of chords and single notes, while the left hand plays a simple bass line.

p

Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in Thee, Let the

p

Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in Thee, Let the

p

Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in Thee, Let the

p

Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in Thee, Let the

Gt p

Ped.

The first system of the vocal and organ accompaniment. It features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and two organ staves. The vocal parts enter with the lyrics 'Rock of Ages cleft for me, Let me hide myself in Thee, Let the'. The organ accompaniment is marked 'p' (piano) and includes a 'Gt p' (Great pedal) section. The tempo is 'Andante sostenuto'.

wa - ter and the blood, From Thy riv - en side which flow'd, Be of

wa - ter and the blood, From Thy riv - en side which flow'd, Be of

wa - ter and the blood, From Thy riv - en side which flow'd, Be of

wa - ter and the blood, From Thy riv - en side which flow'd, Be of

The second system of the vocal and organ accompaniment. It continues the vocal and organ parts from the first system. The vocal parts enter with the lyrics 'wa - ter and the blood, From Thy riv - en side which flow'd, Be of'. The organ accompaniment continues with the same 'p' (piano) marking.

2

sin the dou-ble cure, Save from wrath and make me pure. Rock of

sin the dou-ble cure, Save from wrath and make me pure. Rock of

sin the dou-ble cure, Save from wrath and make me pure. Rock of

sin the dou-ble cure, Save from wrath and make me pure. Rock of

rall.
A-ges cleft for me, Let me hide my-self in Thee.

rall.
A-ges cleft for me, Let me hide my-self in Thee.

rall.
A-ges cleft for me, Let me hide my-self in Thee.

rall.
A-ges cleft for me, Let me hide my-self in Thee.

Soprano or Tenor Solo. $\text{♩} = 80.$ *con espress.*

In my hands no price I bring,

Swell.

Man.

Simply to Thy cross I cling, Naked, come to Thee for dress, Help-less, look to

Ped.

ck of
ck of
ck of
ck of

Thee for grace; Vile I to the Fountain fly, Wash me, Saviour, or I die,

Man.

Wash me, Saviour, or I die.

collu voce *Swell Reeds.*

Ped. *Man.* *Ped.*

Tempo I. *pp*

While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyes shall close in

pp While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyes shall close in

pp While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyes shall close in

pp While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyes shall close in

pp While I draw this fleeting breath, When mine eyes shall close in

Tempo I. *pp*

Great St. Diap. and Double Diap.
couple to Sw. Reeds shut.

ff. **Maestoso. *rall.***

death, When I soar to worlds un-known, See thee on Thy judgment throne.

ff. *rall.* death, When I soar to worlds un-known, See thee on Thy judgment throne.

ff. *rall.* death, When I soar to worlds un-known, See thee on Thy judgment throne.

ff. *rall.* death, When I soar to worlds un-known, See thee on Thy judgment throne.

Maestoso. *rall.*

ff.

4

p

Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in

Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide my - self in

p

Rock of A - ges cleft for me, cleft for

p Sw.

Man.

Slower. *pp*

Thee, Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide, let me

Thee, Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide, let me

me, Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide, let me

Thee, Rock of A - ges cleft for me, Let me hide, let me

Slower. *pp*

f

hide my - self in Thee, my - self in Thee.

hide my - self in Thee, my - self in Thee.

hide my - self in Thee, my - self in Thee.

hide my - self in Thee, my - self in Thee.

p Swell



his feelings in his own words and his own music. This would be no more than following "Nature," as modern prophets bid us. And this brings me to the point that hymns are necessarily artificial. They are artificial in their origin, because those who write them are trammelled in their expression by laws of metre and rhyme; and artificial in their use, because those who sing them sing the words of another, either without a meaning personal to themselves, or—if, as they should do, they mean the words they sing—throwing their feelings into a mould already shaped for them.

The explanation is now obvious of the fact that in many churches the hymn-singing is no more than a dead form. The choirs and congregations sing the hymns with the same amount of soul as the tunes were played by a village organist I once met. He was a carpenter lad, whom his father, a musical enthusiast, had flogged into the attaining of a moderate finger-skill, but whose soul had never gone aloft. I once played for him, and placed before me on the desk both hymn- and tune-book. At the end of the service the organist asked me why I had used both books. "Don't you?" I asked. "No-a," said he: "what be the good?" I asked him how he knew when the hymn was finished. "Ah watches t' people," said he; "an' when ah see 'm a-shutten books, ah know t' last verse be coom."

This perfunctoriness in the act of worship is far too common. In the services of the Church of England it is almost inevitable; for the order of service is inflexible, and the boy choristers, at all events, rarely understand and never realise what they are singing about. This inflexibility must tend to the diminution of worship, if also to the perfection of artistic rendering. But it is almost equally true that in Nonconformist churches the same danger is ever to be guarded against—the danger of allowing the singing to degenerate into a merely formal thing, expressing nothing, and of no avail. The question therefore arises, How can this danger be averted?—how can the hymn-singing in our churches be so cultivated that the words sung may really express the own devotional feeling of those who sing them? My task is to answer, I hope at least partially, this question.

(i) Much more attention should be given by the minister to the selection of the hymns. This, perhaps, is a hard saying, but a true one. I have known ministers who have chosen their hymns as the clock was striking eleven; but I should say "turned up haphazard" rather than "chosen." I have known ministers who have left the choice of hymns to the organist. This is gratifying to the organist, for so he can choose his favourites and eschew the obnoxious. But the plan is radically wrong. It is the minister who holds the key of the service, since it is he who leads in the prayers and teaches in the sermon; it is he who should choose hymns by means of which his flock may echo his prayers, and in which they may find the clinching of his doctrine. The congruity of each service is essential to worship. A healthy man may not at one time laugh and weep: in one service he cannot run up and down the psychological gamut. It is therefore startling to find hymns arranged for weeks in advance. Ministers are not generally believed to prepare their sermons so long before delivery.

At the same time, there is something to be said for the organist who writhes under the inflictions of the minister who insists on choosing his own hymns and abhors variety. One minister I knew was strangely addicted to six-lined long metres: to such an extent that, in order to appease my choir, I had to ransack almost every tune-book known to me for new tunes. Another minister had a peculiar affection for three or four particular hymns, and these were repeated Sunday after Sunday *ad nauseam*. This not only accentuates my opinion that more care should be taken by the minister to suit the hymns to his subject, but induces the further belief that the minister's subjects would sometimes be the better for variety.

(ii) Very much more attention and interest should be shown by the congregation; and here I include the choir. It is not an unfrequent thing to see members of the congregation, even ladies in the choir, singing words well known to them, while their eyes stray from pew to pew; and when they get home their knowledge is recent and accurate of the shape of a certain bonnet or the cut of a certain cloak. And I have seen worthy deacons singing lustily while their whole mind was intent on the safe and in-gathering transit of the money-bag. This habit of inattention is enough to account for the amazing performances sometimes heard—a bright hymn sung in the dulllest listless way, a pensive hymn in the most jovial. I once heard Mr. Mudie's hymn "I lift my heart to Thee"—a hymn at all times, it seems to me, almost too personal to be sung by a large mixed congregation—sung so boisterously as to recall with profane vividness the gay roistering glee, "O who will o'er the downs so free?" And that was not by an uneducated country choir! Such singing is a profanation and a disgrace; and its effects, if there be any, must be of an evil kind.

(iii) The organist must be a man of culture and religious sympathy. This is not such a truism as might be at first imagined. Not many years ago organists were notoriously "barren rascals" in respect of general education, and haply more fond of the tap-room bench than even the organ-stool. The necessity of some literary culture as well as musical ability is now generally admitted, evidence of which is that the University of Oxford has recently increased the difficulty of the "arts test" that has to be passed by candidates for its musical degrees. And surely the very first qualification to be sought for in one who is to lead the congregational worship is the capability of feeling the informing spirit of the hymns; and then, by the special sense in him which perceives the affinities between words and music, of giving that spirit its fit musical embodiment.

I am convinced that much of the shortcoming of the congregation must be laid to the charge of the organist. He has unique opportunities. How often he fails to use them! First, he plays over the tune before the hymn is sung,—what excuse is there for the insipid playing we are so accustomed to—the melody all through on the inflexible clarionet, with expressionless accompaniment on the swell? Why not play the tune so as to reveal to the congregation the spirit of the coming hymn, and stir their feelings to a readiness to respond? And then, while the hymn is being sung, why follow

the method so very common—first verse on the great organ, second verse on the swell without pedals, and a grand blare for the final verse? An organist should have no method: first foster the inner light within him, and then know and love his instrument well enough to make it responsive. And although he should carefully avoid the vagaries of a man I once knew, who began every hymn with a grace note a semitone below the first note for the trebles, and filled in here and there with sevenths and other discords, which he left in all the crudity of unresolvedness: though this should be avoided, there is no reason why an organist should not use all the resources his art affords—if he can do it well—to give expression such as cannot be given by the mere four parts of the tune.

The congregation take their cue from the organist. Let him play mechanically, their singing will be mechanical. Let him play under inspiration, and the congregational singing will have a living, vitalising power. Expressive playing makes a man think. He hears the organist's varied chords; he seeks to discover the meaning of this or that; or, better still, the meaning is intuitively grasped by his sympathetic mind; at any rate, he thinks, and is the more ready thereafter to sing with intelligence and with heart. There is no healthier symptom of earnestness in congregational worship than the discussion that sometimes ensues in the family circle as to the reason or propriety of the organist's accompaniments.

There are of course certain dangers of over-elaboration in this respect; but discussion of these, with more detailed criticism of certain hymns and tunes and the singing of them, I must reserve for another paper.

"In Days of Old."

THE following interesting letter has been received by Mr. F. G. Edwards from one of the subscribers to the fund for the restoration of Shrubsole and Jacob's tombstones in Bunhill Fields:—

"November 14th, 1891.

"DEAR SIR,—

"... During the first thirty-six years of my life (born in 1805) I was a resident in London, and frequently during that period attended Surrey Chapel to hear the popular preachers of the day, who supplied the pulpit for the six months during which the good old man [Rowland Hill] was absent in Gloucestershire. Well do I remember the powerful playing of the organ and the singing of the choir, and the popular tunes of the day—now, alas! replaced by the minors, sharps, flats, etc., of the present day. From my earliest years I heard Jay, of Bath, Sibree, of Frome, Jones, of Harborough, preach their best from the Surrey pulpit. After Mr. Newth, the reader, had gone through the previous (Church of England) service, good old Mr. Davies, the precentor, would shout out so that everybody could hear, 'Let us sing to the praise,' etc.; and then the organist having played over the old tune, he would repeat the usual hymn—

'Lord, we welcome Thy dear servant,
Messenger of gospel grace';

and shouting again, 'The 233rd hymn,' the preacher would emerge from the vestry by the door under the gallery and ascend the pulpit, while the congregation were singing the first verse, and most heartily did they pour forth the notes.

"I heard dear Rowland preach his last ten or twelve sermons, and probably saw him use his pocket-handkerchief for the last time in the pulpit. He had it constantly in his mind and applying it to his nose. On the occasion to which I refer he was followed up the pulpit stairs by an attendant, who helped him into the seat from which he was to speak, and then placed before him a sheet of foolscap paper, on which, I conclude, was written the text from which he was about to discourse. The end soon came, and he was buried under the pulpit which he had so frequently occupied.

"I would write more about *Miles' Lane*, etc., but my sight fails me. I write with pencil, because if I take a dip of ink I lose the place and am apt to write over the previous word.

"You may make what use you please of this, all or any of it. I can't revise.

"Yours faithfully,

"T. O."

Nonconformist Church Organs.

ST. ANDREW'S STREET BAPTIST CHAPEL,
CAMBRIDGE.

Built by Norman Brothers & Beard,

Great Organ, CC to G, 56 Notes.

	Feet.	Pipes.
1. Double Diapason	16	56
2. Major Open Diapason	8	56
3. Minor Open Diapason	8	56
4. Claribel Flute	8	56
5. Harmonic Flute	4	56
6. Octaviant	4	56
7. Trumpet	8	56

Swell Organ, CC to G, 56 Notes.

8. Lieblich Bourdon	16	56
9. Open Diapason	8	56
10. Stopped Diapason	8	56
11. Flute d'Amour	8	56
12. Voix Céleste	8	44
13. Principal	4	56
14. Fifteenth	2	56
15. Mixture (3 ranks)	—	168
16. Horn	8	56
17. Oboe	8	56

Choir Organ, CC to G, 56 Notes.

18. Open Diapason	8	56
19. Dulciana	8	56
20. Lieblich Gedact	8	56
21. Octave Gedact	4	56
22. Cor Anglais	8	56

Pedal Organ, CCC to F, 30 Notes.

23. Open Diapason	16	30
24. Bourdon	16	30
25. Flute	8	30

Couplers.

26. Swell to Great.	29. Swell to Pedals.
27. Swell to Choir.	30. Great to Pedals.
28. Choir to Great.	31. Choir to Pedals.

Three Pneumatic Combination Pistons to Great.

Three Pneumatic Combination Pistons to Swell.

Reversible Pedal to Pedal Coupler.

Balanced Swell Pedal.

The action is tubular pneumatic, with sliderless sound-board, on the builders' patent system of organ pneumatics.

Total number of pipes: Great Organ, 392; Swell Organ, 660; Pedal Organ, 90; Choir Organ, 280. Total, 1422.

The Old Parochial Psalmody.

By J. CUTHBERT HADDEN.

How many of us have looked with pleasure on that well-known painting in the South Kensington Museum representing with such faithfulness the village choir of half a century ago! It has even passed through the minds of some of us that a revival of this old-time mode of conducting the musical services of our churches would be a desirable thing. It would not be so decorous nor so dignified, perhaps, as our present mode, which recognises as expedient only the voice and the organ, but it would probably lead to a more hearty style of congregational song, and it would certainly be picturesque. The music of the churches has indeed changed since those old days of the viol and the bassoon, and the Tate and Brady Psalms. The old "repeat" tunes which the people sung with such lusty vigour have given place to a class of hymn-tunes as different from their predecessors as could well be imagined: the parish clerk reading out the psalm line by line has become as extinct as the pulpit sand-glass; and the pleasing variety of instruments which used to be found accompanying the service is to be met with no more. We are not of those who think that the old things were necessarily the best; but we are certain that, with all the artistic advancement in the services of the English Church, the music has gained nothing in heartiness and enthusiasm. It is more refined, of course; but that is the most that can be said for it. Happily, this aspect of the subject need not concern us here. Our purpose now shall be to speak only of some of those usages and customs which surrounded the old English parochial psalmody, and which have formed an attraction for more than one of our literary leaders.

There was a good deal of humour—and perhaps just a little irreverence—connected with the old "repeat" tunes which our forefathers loved so well. The last line of the tune was, of course, generally taken up by all the parts, and repeated with ever-increasing force and heartiness. The musical effect must have often been good; but unfortunately the last line of the words would not always bear the process of repetition with becoming dignity. If, for example, it were "And take Thy pilgrim home," the sober-minded worshipper would find himself singing, "And take Thy pil—"; if, again, it were, "I love to steal awhile away," the choir would be heard proclaiming a somewhat alarming defiance of the Decalogue; while "And catch the fleeting hour" would produce an injunction which, proper enough under certain circumstances, could hardly be conducive to devotional feeling. Other instances of this ludicrous kind were: "And love Thee bet-ter than before"; "Where my sal-vation stands"; "Oh for a man-sion in the skies"; "Stir up this stu-pid heart"; "And learn to kiss—the rod"; "My poor pol-luted heart,"—each divided where the hyphen is placed.

But the climax of sentiment and singing was reached when the choir took up a verse like this, set to the old "fugueing" style of tune:—

"True love is like that precious oil
Which, poured on Aaron's head,
Ran down his beard and o'er his robes,
Its costly moisture shed."

No wonder that Bishop Seabury doubted whether Aaron would have any hair left after he had been treated by the choir after the following fashion:—

"Its costly moist—ran down his beard—
Ure beard—his—beard—his—shed—
Ran down his beard—his—down his robes—
Its costly moist—his beard—ure shed—
His cost—ure robes—his robes—he shed—
I-t-s—c-o-s-t-l-y—moist-ure—shed."

Miss Charlotte Yonge alludes to the old custom in her "Chantry House." "There was," we read, "an outburst of bassoon, clarionet, and fiddle, and the performance that followed was the most marvellous we had ever heard, especially when the big butcher, fiddling all the time, declared in a mighty solo, 'I am Jo-Jo-Jo-Joseph, and having reiterated this information four or five times, inquired with equal pertinacity, 'Doth my fa-a-uther yet live?' " Mr. Hughes, in his delightful "Tom Brown at Oxford," has something to say of the doings of the choir at Englebourne Parish Church: how the bass viol proceeded thither to do the usual rehearsals and gossip with the sexton; and how at the singing of the verse in the 91st Psalm which ends with the words, "With dragons stout and strong," the trebles took up the line, and then the whole strength of the gallery chorused again, "With dra-gons stout and strong," the bass viol meanwhile prolonging his notes and gloating over them as he droned them out.

Very interesting, too, in this connection is the following curious extract from an old number of the now defunct *Fraser's Magazine*: "The particular choir in our own church," says the writer, "we recollect well to this day, and some of their most striking tunes. We used to listen with mingled awe and admiration to the performance of the eighteenth Psalm in particular. Take two lines as an illustration of their style:—

'And snatched me from the furious rage
Of threatening waves that proudly swelled.'

The words 'And snatched me' were repeated severally by the trebles, the altos, the tenors, and the basses; then altogether sang the words two or three times over; in like manner did they toss and tumble over 'the furious rage,' apparently enjoying the whirligig scurrying of their fugues, like so many kittens chasing their own tails; till at length, after they had torn and worried that single line even to the exhaustion of the most powerful lungs—after a very red-faced bass, who kept the village inn, had become perceptibly apoplectic about the eyes, and the bassoon was evidently blown, and a tall, thin man, with a long nose, which was his principal vocal organ, and which sang tenor, was getting out of wind—they all, clarionet, bassoon, violoncello, the red-faced man, the tall tenor, and the rest rushed pell-mell into 'the threatening waves that proudly swelled.' We have not forgotten the importance with which they used to walked up the church path in a body with their instruments after this effort; and our childish fancy revelled in the impression that, after the clergyman,

and the Duke of Wellington, who had won the battle of Waterloo a few years before, these singers were the most notable public characters in being." All this sounds very picturesque, but perhaps the reality would not be so pleasant to our senses after all.

The anthem in olden times must have been looked upon as a great institution. It is recorded of one clergyman that he announced to his people one Sunday morning, "I see some musical friends from Redditch have come in, so that we will have an anthem presently." So keen an observer of English country life as George Eliot was not likely to miss a feature of such interest as the village choir, and much may be learnt from her works of the nature of the old psalmody. We recall a passage in one of the "Scenes of Clerical Life," in which there is an elaborate account of the singing at Shepperton Church: how as the moment of psalmody approached a slate appeared in front of the gallery, advertising in bold characters the psalm about to be sung, lest the sonorous announcement of the clerk should leave the bucolic mind in doubt on that head; how this was followed by the migration of the clerk to the gallery, when, in company with a bassoon, two key-bugles, a carpenter understood to have an amazing power of singing "counter," and two lesser musical stars, he formed the complement of a choir regarded in Shepperton as one of distinguished attraction, occasionally known to draw hearers from the next parish. But the anthem? Ah! yes—"the greatest triumphs of the Shepperton choir were reserved for the Sunday when the slate announced an ANTHEM, with a dignified abstinence from particularisation, both words and music lying far beyond the reach of the most ambitious amateurs in the congregation"—an anthem in which the key-bugles are described as always running away at a great pace, while the bassoon every now and then boomed a flying shot after them.

In speaking of instrumental accompaniment to the services, one must remember that the general introduction, even of the organ, is the work of comparatively recent times. Early in the sixteenth century the clergy of the Lower House in the Province of Canterbury protested to the king that the "playing at the organes" was a "foolish vanitie"; and again, in 1586, it was proposed that "all cathedral churches may be put down where the service of God is grievously abused by piping with organs, singing, ringing, and trowling of psalms from one side of the choir to another." In the middle of the seventeenth century the organ suffered very severely in the general demolition of the church furniture, the objections to it having their ground, no doubt, in a recollection of the abuses of the pre-Reformation worship. The erection of an organ in St. John's College, Oxford, was considered an unmistakable proof of Laud's popish tendencies, and Milton was almost alone among the Puritans in his love of this kind of church music. By-and-by the opposition died away. The Restoration was hardly accomplished when garrulous old Pepys was able to record that "this day the organs did begin to play before the king." Under date November 4th, 1660, we find: "To the Abbey, where the first time that I ever heard the organs in a cathedral"; and on April 4th, 1667, the chronicler writes: "To Hackney. Here I was told that at their church they have a fair pair of organs

which play while the people sing, which I am mighty glad of, wishing the like at our church in London, and would give £50 towards it." The term "pair" of organs, frequently met with about this time, has been a puzzle to many. It did not mean, as is often supposed, a couple of instruments, but simply an organ with more than one set of pipes. In this sense—that is, in the sense of an aggregate and as synonymous with set—the term was used in other connections, as, for instance, "a pair of chessmen," "a pair of beads," "a pair of cards," and so on. Thus we have Fletcher writing in 1624, "Go, get a pair of beads, and learn to pray, sir"; and Ben Jonson asks, "Have you ne'er a son at the groom porter's to borrow a pair of cards?" Some writers have said that "a pair of organs" meant an organ with two stops; but this is quite evidently erroneous, as in the curious inventory of Henry VIII.'s musical instruments mention is made of "a payer of virginalls with four stoppes."

(To be continued.)

THE NONCONFORMIST CHOIR UNION.

A CHORAL festival service was held in the City Temple on Tuesday, the 2nd ult. Unfortunately the meteorological conditions prevented many from attending, as well as the prevalence of the epidemic which is more or less affecting every family. Rough and variable weather was prophesied, and the prophecy was literally fulfilled. Hence the congregation, although large, was not so numerous as we have seen it upon many previous occasions.

The service commenced at half-past seven o'clock, by which time the representatives of the following choirs were in their places:—Dalston (Wesleyan); Stoke Newington (Wesleyan); Kentish Town (Congregational); Bromley (Congregational); Rectory Road (Congregational); Dalston (Congregational); Waterloo Road (Congregational); Chiswick (Baptist); Catford (Wesleyan); South Norwood (Baptist); City Temple; Highbury Athenæum (Baptist); Old Gravel Pit; Trinity, Walthamstow; Clifton, Peckham; Trinity, Islington; Great Queen Street (Wesleyan); Harley Street, Bow; Abney (Congregational); Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road. Though over five hundred singers had applied for books, not more than two hundred were present, the influenza being accountable for the absence of many.

It must be remembered that the service was an act of Divine worship and not a concert, a function upon which it is not customary to offer any criticism—a rule which in this instance will not be broken. It simply rests with the chronicler to name the hymns and anthems sung upon this most interesting occasion; merely premising that Mr. Arthur Briscoe, organist of Highbury Quadrant Church, ably presided at the organ, and Mr. A. J. Hawkins, of Kentish Town Congregational Church, conducted very efficiently.

The introductory voluntary was played by Mr. F. W. Noakes, organist of Craven Chapel, Bayswater. The introit was "Lord of all power and might" (Minshall); the first hymn was "O worship the King" (*Hanover*), after which part of Isaiah lx. was chanted to *Woodward* in D. The introductory service was taken by the Rev. J. J. Goundry, of Walthamstow. The first lesson was succeeded by Barnby's Magnificat; and the second by the Nunc Dimittis, by the same composer. Dr. Parker then offered prayer, after which Sullivan's anthem "Harken unto Me, My people" was sung; also "O Paradise! O Paradise!" to Smart's fine tune.

Dr. Parker then gave a short address, which he commenced by expressing his obligations to all who were taking part in musical proceedings. Having discharged that duty, the Doctor made some very practical remarks: among other things he maintained that the sermon can never be displaced, although some people think that it can; it is the speech of God. The music is good; so must the sermon be. The Gospel must be the sweetest music in the sanctuary. Speaking of anthems, the Doctor said, "You have an anthem-book—then use it. True music can never grow old." But the preacher thought that some anthems should be discontinued, because they were too subtle and are a species of gymnastics. Dr. Parker recommended his congregation to read their hymns before singing them. There is great art in reading a hymn. Mr. Spurgeon was cited as having been a good hymn reader. With regard to choirs, the Doctor had a few words upon the dignity of their work, and the need of discipline and veneration. Some are afraid of what their neighbours think. Mr. Spurgeon would have been forgotten forty years ago had he thought about the opinion of his neighbours. In such fashion the Doctor discoursed.

At the close of the address an appeal was made and an offertory taken for the funds of the Union, during which Mr. T. R. Croger sang a solo.

The congregation then joined in singing "Christian! dost thou see them?" to *Holy War*; the choirs sang Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." The Benediction was followed by Stainer's "Sevenfold Amen." As the congregation retired, Mr. E. S. Goodes, organist of Walthamstow Congregational Church, played the concluding voluntary.

THE LONDON SUNDAY-SCHOOL CHOIR.

THIS flourishing choir gave their annual winter concert in the Albert Hall, on the 13th ult., before a large audience. The orchestra was filled with about fourteen hundred singers, but the balance of parts (almost unavoidable in a Sunday-school choir) was unequal, the tenors being especially weak. The choral part of the programme was made up of the principal pieces sung at the Crystal Palace Festival last summer. Among them were: "The Lord is my light," the Credo from Haydn's *First Mass*, Sir John Stainer's fine "Hosanna in the highest," "The Potter," "The Nightingale," Hadyn's melodious "At the coming of spring," and the choruses "He watching over Israel" and "How excellent Thy name." All these were sung with much taste and with careful attention to expression. The orchestra (led by Mr. Swainsbury), as usual, took a prominent part in the concert, and were heard to advantage in the Dead March in *Saul*, played out of respect to the memory of the Duke of Clarence, the Coronation March in *Le Prophète*, and Auber's *La Sirène* overture. Madame Antoinette Sterling and Mr. Oswald Sharples were the solo vocalists, both of them gaining well-deserved encores. Mr. Luther Hinton conducted with his well-known skill, and Mr. David Davies rendered valuable service at the organ.

Echoes from the Churches.

(Paragraphs for this column should reach us by the 20th of the month.)

METROPOLITAN.

BETHNAL GREEN.—On Tuesday, the 9th ult., the annual meeting of the choir of Bethnal Green Road Congregational Church was held in the School Hall,

Mr. D. Dean (church secretary) presiding in the absence of the Rev. J. Stockwell Watts. Tea was provided at seven o'clock, after which the secretary of the choir (Mr. W. Belsham) gave his report for the past year. After speeches from Messrs. Morton, Dunkley, Dean, Oxen, Flatman, Jones, and others testifying to the favourable condition of the choir and its funds, the business meeting concluded. Solos were efficiently rendered by several members of the choir and other friends.

CAMDEN TOWN.—Mr. Charles Darnton, who recently resigned his position as organist at Park Chapel, which he has held for about twenty-five years, was presented with a cheque for £84. The presentation took place in the presence of a numerous company. It is gratifying to Mr. Darnton's many friends to know that such a lengthened period of faithful and efficient service has been so kindly recognised.

HORNSEY.—At the Willoughby Road Wesleyan Chapel, on Sunday, the 7th ult., special music was sung on the occasion of the choir anniversary, the anthems for the morning being "But as for His people" (Handel), and "The Son of God goes forth to war," set to *St. Anne's* (Sullivan's arrangement). During the collection "Lord, we pray Thee" (Roberts) was sung as a quartet by Mrs. Bradford, Mrs. Phillips, Mr. Webb, and Mr. Bradford. In the evening "Gracious and righteous is the Lord" (Carter) and "O gladsome Light" (Sullivan) were effectively rendered by the choir, and "Grant us Thy peace" (Mendelssohn) was sung by Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Cross, and Messrs. Ford and Wolfenden. In continuation of this anniversary Carter's cantata *Placida* was successfully performed on the following Tuesday evening by the choir and friends. Although their ranks were much thinned by the absence of members on account of illness, they did their work well. With the exception of the male choruses, which were somewhat lacking in power, the concerted numbers went with a good swing, and were sung with precision and taste. The solo parts were taken by Madame Barter, representing *Placida*, Mrs. Cross (Bertha), Mr. H. Crook (Metellus), Mr. W. Young (Rufus), Mr. G. Jarrett (Fabian), and Mr. G. Andrews (Nero), and in such capable hands left nothing to be desired. In the first chorus the quartet was effectively rendered by Mrs. Agnew, Mrs. Phillips, Messrs. Ford and Cross. No small part of the success of the evening was due to the careful and efficient playing of the accompaniments by Mrs. Jarrett and Mr. R. Wolfenden on the piano and American organ respectively. Mr. J. R. Kilner, the chapel organist, conducted as usual. A chairman thoroughly in sympathy with choir work was found in Mr. J. E. Alger, who presided, and the Rev. Frank Hall, the resident minister, gave a short address appropriate to the occasion. On each occasion large gatherings were present, and the collections were considerably above the average.

ISLINGTON.—A performance of Mozart's *Requiem Mass* and Mendelssohn's music to Racine's *Athalie* was given in Union Chapel, Islington, on Wednesday evening, the 3rd ult. The solos in the *Requiem* were taken by Miss Florence Monk, Miss Lizzie Jones, Mr. G. Micklewood, and Mr. W. Bradford, who all sang with much taste and expression in this difficult work. Mendelssohn's *Athalie*, with its melodious music, presented a great contrast to the *Mass*. Miss Maggie Jones joined the aforesaid ladies in the trios, etc., and their young fresh voices were charming to listen to. Mr. Charles Fry recited the illustrative verses with much dramatic power. Mr. Fountain Meen, as usual accompanied the voices on the organ with much skill. The "War March of Priests" was listened to with rapt attention; the resources of the fine instrument, which was in splendid tune, were most judiciously displayed

by the accomplished organist. The choruses were rendered by members of the Psalmody Class, under Mr. R. Williamson's conductorship, and were well rendered. The admission was free by ticket, a collection being taken on behalf of Dr. Barnardo's homes and mission for destitute children.

KENTISH TOWN.—The choir of the Congregational Church held their annual social soiree on Monday evening, the 8th ult. The members and friends were welcomed by the pastor and deacons of the church, and a very enjoyable evening was spent. Tea was provided as a preliminary to the interesting and lengthy programme, which materially helped towards making the gathering sociable. The necessary business of the meeting was brightened by the interspersing of songs, pianoforte solos, etc., ably rendered by the members. The principal feature of the evening was the presentation of a silver tea service from the members of the choir to the organist and choirmaster, Mr. A. J. Hawkins, whose untiring exertions for the improvement of the psalmody of the church have made him justly worthy of this expression of their esteem and regard. In returning thanks on behalf of himself and Mrs. Hawkins, he said that such a generous action was more than a surprise to them, and words failed him for the moment to express as he would wish their most sincere thanks for this token of the appreciation of their services. He hoped that every year would find them a choir bound together by the strongest possible ties. It was heard with regret that, through press of business, Mr. Walter S. Bensted found it necessary to resign his position as hon. secretary and treasurer, and the heartiest thanks of the meeting were tendered to him for the valuable service he had rendered to the choir during the past two years. Mr. Alexander H. Richards was unanimously elected successor.

SYDENHAM.—On the 1st ult. Mr. Minshall delivered his lecture on "Nonconformist Worship Music" in the hall connected with the Church in the Grove. The pastor, the Rev. A. F. Joselyne, presided. The illustrations had been very carefully prepared by the choir, under the direction of Mr. Joselyne, in the absence of Mr. Dowse, the organist of the church.

PROVINCIAL.

CAMBRIDGE.—The new organ, erected by Messrs. Norman Bros. & Beard, Norwich, in St. Andrew's Street Baptist Church, Cambridge (particulars of which will be found in another column), was opened by Dr. Mann on January 20th. His programme was as follows:—Toccata and Fugue in D minor (Bach); Fantasia in C (B. Tours), (a) Allegro molto, (b) Andante con molto, (c) Allegro moderato and Allegro molto; Adagio in C sharp minor, No. 1, Op. 27, *Moonlight Sonata* (Beethoven); Barcarolle in F (Sterndale Bennett); Concerto in B flat, No. 2, Set 1 (Handel), (a) Largo, (b) Allegro, (c) Adagio, (d) Allegro ma non presto.

CLECKHEATON.—The reopening of the organ in Providence Place Chapel, which has been enlarged and improved, took place on the 5th ult., Dr. A. L. Peace presiding at the instrument. In the afternoon the Doctor gave a recital, his programme running as follows:—Festival Overture, Gutenberg, Op. 55 (G. Löwe); Larghetto and Finale, from the Clarinet Quintet (Mozart); Offertorio per Organo, F minor and major (Gio Morandi); Romanza, G major, Op. 40 (Beethoven); Marche Nuptiale (Gounod); solo and double chorus, "Sing ye to the Lord" (Handel). In the evening parts 1 and 2 of Haydn's oratorio *The Creation* were sung by the chapel choir, largely augmented, the number of voices being about eighty. The parts were very evenly balanced, and the really splendid manner in which the grand cho-

ruises were sung reflected great credit on the choir-master of the chapel, Mr. R. Firth, who conducted on this occasion. The principals were Miss Letitia Moore, Mr. Simpson, and Mr. W. Thornton, all of whom fully sustained their excellent reputations. The work was most worthily presented, and applause from the large audience was frequent and hearty, notably after some of the more popular choruses. On the following Sunday Dr. Peace again presided at the organ, and the choir rendered several anthems in first-class style. Two very interesting sermons, bearing largely on the subject of "Praise," were preached by the Rev. W. Jansen Davies. At the close of the evening service Dr. Peace played several choruses from Handel's oratorio *Judas Maccabæus*.

HUNTINGDON.—On January 27th and 28th Gaul's *Ten Virgins* was performed in the Corn Exchange and Trinity Congregational Church respectively. This new cantata was performed by a choir of eighty voices and a band of thirty performers. The chief attraction, however, was the fact that Mr. A. R. Gaul, the composer, would himself conduct. The orchestra, which included several local musicians, was augmented by professionals from London, Cambridge, and Bedford. Mr. Frank Clark, the talented organist of Trinity Church, was the promoter. The soloists were Miss Alice Davies (soprano), Miss Annie Holmes (contralto), Mr. W. Driver (tenor), and Mr. S. Westby Daniels, A.R.C.M. (bass). The manner in which the performers acquitted themselves proved the great pains and ability with which Mr. Frank Clark had trained the choir, which was an exceptionally good one—we might almost say brilliant. The performance, on the whole, went off remarkably well, and excepting a slight difficulty here and there with the stringed instruments, no fault can be found. Altogether the performance was one of the most successful ever given in Huntingdon, and much credit is due to all who took part in it. At the conclusion the conductor was accorded an outburst of applause.

MARLBOROUGH.—The members of the Congregational Church and congregation, with invited friends, held a "social gathering" in the schoolroom on Wednesday evening, the 17th ult., when, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather, there was a good attendance. During the evening an excellent programme of music (interspersed with readings) was given by a well-balanced choir, conducted by Mr. A. E. Gutteridge, the organist. Criticism of the performances at a gathering of this kind would be somewhat out of place, but the manner in which the part-songs and likewise the songs were given deserves special mention. The instrumental duet and solos were effectively played, and the accompaniments taken by the organist. At the close of the programme, a vote of thanks was proposed by the pastor, the Rev. H. G. Fear, and the hearty singing of the National Anthem concluded a very pleasant evening.

NOTTINGHAM.—The quarterly festival of the High Pavement Chapel Choir was held on the 14th ult. The principal service was that in the evening, and, despite the inclemency of the weather, the spacious edifice was crowded. A string band accompanied the hymns. The first hymn was written by Mr. Samuel Collinson, a member of the congregation, and it was sung to a stately tune composed by Mr. Wright. Sir J. Goss's setting to the well-known hymn "Praise, my soul, the King of heaven" gave ample opportunity to the augmented choir to show their ability, and of this they fully availed themselves. Mr. Charles Blagbro, of the Leeds Parish Church Choir, sang the favourite aria from *St. Paul* "Be thou faithful unto death." The third hymn, "Hark, hark, my soul," was sung to a pretty tune composed by the late Mr. Henry Farmer. During the collection for the choir fund, Miss Margaret Clark gave an expressive rendering of Mackenzie's lovely "Benedictus."

After the service, four extra selections were given. The first was Sonata 15 in C for organ and strings, by Mozart. The capable string band did full justice to it. The Kyrie and Gloria from Mozart's *Twelfth Mass* followed. Mr. Blagbro sang Gounod's setting to the "Evening Hymn" with much expression, and the service concluded with a masterly rendering by organ and band of Mendelssohn's "Cornelius" March. The Rev. James Harwood, B.A., gave a short address. The whole service was arranged by Mr. Wright, who ably presided at the organ.

PEMBROKE DOCK.—On Sunday, the 21st ult., Albion Square Congregational Church Choir celebrated their first "Choir Sunday." The Congregational Church Hymnal (from which the hymns, chants, and anthems were selected) is now in full use in the church. During the evening service, Master Harry Lewis rendered "Hear my prayer," and Mr. J. G. Bray the beautiful baritone solo "Calvary." Master Lewis possesses a good treble voice, which, with a little training, would be of great service to the choir of which he is a member. Mr. Bray is the possessor of a good baritone voice, which he uses to advantage whenever he appears in public. The choir, which numbers forty-five voices, rendered the hymns, chants, and anthems with excellent taste. Miss Bessie Gay (Cert. Hon. R.A.M.) presided at the organ with her usual ability. Mr. W. H. Phelps (choirmaster) conducted. The preacher was the Rev. J. Lloyd-Williams, B.A., Tenby, who preached excellent sermons on the occasion. The offertory was devoted to the choir fund.

RYDE.—The members of the choir of the Congregational Church had a very pleasant reunion on Thursday evening, January 28th. The tables were very tastefully laid in one of the spacious class-rooms. After the removal of the cloth, the remainder of the evening was devoted to various games, music, etc., etc., and a most enjoyable evening concluded by singing the National Anthem. The meeting was arranged for the purpose of taking farewell of the popular choirmaster (Mr. J. N. Bennett), who is resigning the appointment. Mr. J. C. Beazley, R.A.M., has just been appointed organist and choirmaster of the above church.

ST. IVES.—On the 11th ult. there was a good audience in the Congregational Church to hear a performance of A. R. Gaul's latest cantata *The Ten Virgins*, which was given by a choir from Huntingdon, admirably trained by Mr. Frank Clark, who conducted. The solo work was undertaken by the Misses M. and C. Ridgley, A. Lamb, and Messrs. W. Driver and S. Westby Daniels.

ST. NEOTS.—On the 2nd ult. an excellent performance of *The Ten Virgins* (Gaul) was given in the Congregational Church by friends from Huntingdon. Misses Ettie Hall, C. Ridgley, and A. Lamb, and Messrs. W. Driver and S. Westby Daniels took the solos. Mr. Frank Clark ably conducted.

Correspondence.

(We shall be glad to receive communications from any of our readers on questions likely to be of general interest.)

CHOIR COMPETITIONS.

To the Editor of THE NONCONFORMIST MUSICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,—I believe it has several times been suggested that a choir competition should be arranged in connection with the annual festival of the Nonconformist Choir Union at the Crystal Palace. Probably there are difficulties in the way which have prevented the suggestion being carried out by the committee. But is it not

possible to have such a friendly competition at some other time? It might be held in a convenient chapel in London. The necessary preparation for such a contest would be very beneficial to the choirs taking part. I feel sure there are many choirs in the metropolis willing to compete, and thus a very interesting and useful programme might be arranged.

The Nonconformist Choir Union has already done much to stimulate increased interest in our church music. Will the committee render still further service by inaugurating an annual choir competition?

Yours, etc.,

A. B.

Reviews.

Hark the Glad Sound, the Saviour Comes, and Give Me the Wings of Faith to Rise. By Arthur Berridge. (J. Curwen & Sons, Warwick Lane. 2d. each.)—Popular and easy settings of these two well-known hymns. Very suitable for Sunday-school anniversaries.

Short Voluntaries for Organ or Harmonium. By George MacMaster. (Schott & Co., 157, Regent Street, W. Book I. 2s. 6d.)—This book of twenty-four pages contains six pleasing pieces in various styles written on two staves. They are certainly superior to the ordinary run of "Short Voluntaries."

We have received the following from Messrs. Novello, Ewer, & Co. :—

Christ is Risen. By J. H. Maunder. 3d.—A bold and altogether excellent anthem. Choirs requiring something new for Easter Sunday should see this composition.

Fugue Subjects. By A. W. Marchant. 3s.—This is one of Novello's excellent primers. This collection of fugue subjects and answers is an attempt to place before the student a varied selection of examples from ancient and modern writers of fugues, with a view of showing, in a convenient form, the application of the several points usually to be met with in the matter of subject and answer according to rules as generally understood. Musical students will find this work exceedingly useful and equally interesting.

Hand Gymnastics. By Ridley Prentice. 1s. 6d.—The aim of this book is to sketch out a course of gymnastics suitable for use in schools and classes. The adoption of these exercises cannot fail to be most helpful to pianoforte students.

The Day of Rest. A Cantata for Female Voices. By Josiah Booth. 2s.—This work will be a welcome addition to the limited stock of good music for female voices. It is melodious and free from serious difficulties, and will add to Mr. Booth's reputation as a composer of no ordinary ability. The words are written by Edward Oxenford.

The Two Advents. A Church Cantata. By George Garrett, M.A. 1s. 6d.—Choirs wanting a work at once effective and fairly easy will find this cantata exactly to their mind. It is admirably adapted for a special musical service, as it takes forty minutes in performance.

Twelve Songs by Handel, for contralto, 2s.; *Twelve Songs by Handel*, for tenor, 2s. Edited by Alberto Randegger.—These books will be invaluable to singers, as each song is most carefully marked for expression and breathing. No one is more qualified to thus direct vocalists than Signor Randegger.

Lead, Kindly Light. A Sacred Song. By Roland Rogers. 2s. net.—A very pleasing and appropriate setting of this favourite hymn.

Sonata for the Organ. By Oliver King. 2s.—This is a prelude with variations and *toccata* on a German chorale. It will be found specially useful for recital purposes.

Fantasia for the Organ. By E. Silas. 2s.—This piece was composed for the opening of the new organ at Blenheim Palace in May last. It is an interesting composition, and will repay careful study.

Nursery Rhymes. Arranged for Four Voices. By C. E. Melville, F.C.O. 4d.—Choral societies will find this a very popular piece of the lighter kind to include in their programmes.

To Correspondents.

A. C. O.—(1) Messrs. Augener publish several that would probably suit you. Send for their catalogue. "Cramer's" would most likely be the best for you. (2) Try "Beware" (Hatton), "A Wet Sheet and a Flowing Sea" (C. H. Lloyd), "I Loved a Lass" (Hatton).

A CHOIRMASTER should get *The Son of Man* (Wilson), *The Star of Bethlehem* (Darnton), published by J. Curwen & Sons.

B. F. J.—Try Chappell & Co.

NOVICE.—Keep to the diapasons.

The following are thanked for their letters:—T. L. (Shrewsbury), F. S. (Sheffield), W. J. (Exeter), P. J. (Edinburgh), A. B. (Guernsey), W. F. J. (Bury St. Edmunds), T. O. (Rugby), J. W. L. (Belfast).

Staccato Notes.

THE Guildhall School Committee have definitely resolved that a principal shall be appointed; and the election, which is in the hands of the Common Council, will be held within the next few weeks. The salary proposed is £800. The following is believed to be a full list of the candidates in alphabetical order:—Drs. Warwick Jordan and Verrinder; Messrs. Joseph Barnby, Orton Bradley, W. Carter, Cummings, Cusins, Gadsby, George Mount, Ebenezer Prout, and Thomas Wingham.

THE London Wagner Society has 214 members. It is intended this year to give a concert with a small orchestra instead of the special programme at the Richter Concerts.

MR. MANNS, at the conclusion of the Glasgow Choral Union Concerts, publicly complained of adverse criticism. He said: "I and the members of the orchestra have during this session, as on several former sessions, had to do our work under the oppressive burden of a strangely unsympathetic critique."

"THE Peace of God" is the title of a new song just composed by Gounod.

MR. BARNBY has been appointed conductor for the Cardiff Festival to be held in the autumn. About £500 is still required for the guarantee fund.

MUSIC is flourishing at the East End of London. *The Golden Legend* was recently performed before a large audience in Mr. Charrington's Assembly Hall.

MISS DORA BRIGHT, a most promising pianoforte player, gave a recital of music by English composers only in Prince's Hall on the 16th ult.

Accidentals.

MRS. BUNTING: "Who was the violinist who played at your reception, Mrs. Larkin?"

MRS. LARKIN: "It wasn't a violinist at all. It was a virtuoso. Why, I had to pay him ten guineas."

A MUSICIAN thus defines woman at various ages: At fifteen she is *arpeggio*; at twenty she is *allegro vivace*; at thirty she is an *accorde forte*; at forty, an *andante*; at fifty commences the *rondo finale*, and at sixty the *tremolo alla sordina*.

"So Jack is married, eh? Do you think he'll get along well with his wife?" "I'm quite sure he will. They sang together in the same choir for two years without quarrelling."

THE following was recently found posted in the lobby of a church: "Notice—The person who stole 'Songs of the Sanctuary' from seat No. 32 should improve the opportunity of using them here, as he will have no occasion of singing them hereafter."

MISTRESS (benevolently to her maid in anticipation of a compliment): "What would you do if you could play the piano as well as I can?"

MAID: "I should take lessons."

"Do you play much on the piano?" he asked, after she had finished a selection.

"I use the instrument a good deal for killing time," she said.

"Yes, I should suppose you used it for that."

HUSBAND: "What was that you were playing, my dear?"

WIFE: "Did you like it?"

HUSBAND: "It was exquisite!"

WIFE: "It is the very thing I played last evening, and you said it was horrid."

HUSBAND: "Well, the steak was burned last evening."

MRS. NATTERTON: "How did John and Mary get acquainted with each other?"

MRS. BANG: "They sang in the same church choir."

MRS. NATTERTON: "Oh, I see. They met by chants."

"How beautifully your daughter plays," said Mrs. Peterby. The music ceased at that moment. The door opened, and a German professor said: "Pefore I finishes tuning dot piano I vants mine tollar and a half."

UNCLE WAYBACK (at metropolitan concert): "I can't make head or tail out of that tune the fiddlers is playin'." CITY NIECE (whispering): "It's a symphony." "It don't seem funny a bit. Who wrote it?" "Beethoven." "Who's he?" "A great German composer, uncle." "Oh! no wonder I can't understand it. But considering the price they charge for tickets I think they might play it in English."

SIMS REEVES, when a young man, received singing lessons from a teacher conspicuous alike for his ability and brusque manner. One day while at lesson Sims was requested to sing a verse of a then popular song. He had scarcely sung the first line when his teacher abruptly interrupted him with "Stop, sir, you are flat—very flat." "And you, sir, are sharp—very sharp," was the instant retort of the now famous tenor, as he picked up his music and indignantly left the room.